

TISA Steering Committee Meeting

May 22, 2023, 4:00 PM CST, Microsoft Teams

Meeting Notes

Attendees

Jon Lundberg, Senate Education Chairman
Mark White, House Education Administration Chairman
Warren Wells, Member, State Board of Education
Bo Griffin, Director of Schools, Millington Municipal Schools
Cat Stephens, Director of Schools, Tullahoma City Schools
Steve Barnett, Director of Schools, Johnson City Schools
Justin Robertson, Director of Schools, Hamilton County Schools
Sara Carpenter, Executive Director, The Memphis Lift
Christy Carroll Highfill, Parent
Jennings Wilson, Parent
Jen Aprea, Parent, The Arc Tennessee
Melissa Collins, Teacher of the Year, Memphis-Shelby County Schools
Kyle Loudermilk, Principal of the Year, Kingsport City Schools
Guy Respass, Data Management Director, Knox County Schools
Teresa Winter, CFO, Bartlett City Schools
Nancy Dishner, Executive Director, Niswonger Foundation
Teresa Sloyan, Executive Director, Hyde Family Foundation
Victor Evans, Executive Director, Tennessee CAN
Jack Powers, Regional Legislative Director, ExcelinEd
Gini Pupo Walker, Executive Director, EdTrust

TDOE Staff Attendees

Penny Schwinn, Commissioner of Education
Chelsea Crawford, Chief of Staff
Sam Percy, Deputy Commissioner of Operations
Meghan McLeroy, Chief of Statewide Supports
Shannon Gordon, Chief Operating Officer
Eve Carney, Deputy Commissioner of Districts and Schools
Christy Ballard, General Counsel
Aimee LaGrone, Senior Director of Engagement
Reed Cook, Director of Legislative Affairs
Grace Shelton, Asst. Commissioner of Program & Financial Performance & Evaluation
Kate Sanders, Manager of Engagement & External Partnerships
Nia Perry, Engagement Specialist

Greetings and Opening Comments

Chelsea Crawford welcomed all committee members and staff to the meeting. After the welcome, Chelsea gave an overview of the meetings which will include the following:

- TISA Refresh: Understanding the funding formula,
- Current work that is underway and opportunities that are available for districts and school, and
- Expectations and roles as a TISA Steering Committee member.

Commissioner's Updates

Commissioner Penny Schwinn opened by thanking the committee for their time. She hopes the steering committee can provide counsel, advice, and direction for the department to ensure stakeholders feel well-informed.

- TISA intends to empower students to read proficiently by third grade. The state is currently at a 40% proficient rate for third graders in English Language Arts, the highest it's been since standards were reset in 2017.
- TISA is designed to empower and ensure that all Tennessee high school graduates succeed in the postsecondary programs of their choice and that each student receives what they need to thrive.
- Significant investments by the General Assembly made this happen, and +\$1 billion of new state funds will go into the funding formula each year. It is the most significant recurring investment Tennessee has ever made in public education.
- For the TISA framework, the base is \$6,860 for this year. The TISA guide will continue to provide additional guidance and support for districts for the weights. That is due by July 1st, and the department is in the final stages of reviewing and finalizing the State Board of Education rules and policies.
- Outcomes Funding begins this year. From the results of the TCAP and some of the postsecondary attainment at the end of the 2022-23 school year, districts will start to see the outcomes bonus dollars, and the department will put those into allocations beginning Fall 2023. Districts will receive outcomes funding based on the incredible growth that is seen in the state regarding student proficiency, specifically in elementary grades.
- There is a finalization for the CTE matrix, which means there is more funding the longer the student matriculates in the program of study. More funding will be distributed for Level 3 and 4 tiers to incentivize completers, and more funding will be distributed for high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand jobs to promote these fields.
- Commissioner Schwinn highlighted the importance of an alignment in reporting as it relates to Pre-K through higher education. TISA reporting will provide the state a

way of reporting that is different than the current structure and allow further connection to resource allocation.

- There's certainly a lot on accountability, and the review boards don't start for another year. We want to have enough time to talk through process recommendations and work with the General Assembly on their expectations, so we can proactively communicate with districts.

Priority 1: Roles and Responsibilities

Commissioner Schwinn reiterated that the steering committee represents a diverse group of individuals across the state. As a state, we should consider how we should be talking about reporting while creating tools and resources to help the community, the public, taxpayers, as well as district and school stakeholders, to be able to understand the generation and use of funding and the return on those investments.

- The committee has a series of meetings between May and September 2023.
- Commissioner Schwinn shared that her last committee meeting is on May 31 and that Sam Percy, who will be the interim Commissioner of Education, will lead the conversation on June 26.
- Commissioner Reynolds will lead the July, August, and September meetings. She will discuss implementation in terms of vision roles and responsibilities of the TISA Steering Committee.
- Commissioner Schwinn shared that upon passage, the General Assembly highlighted the importance of return on investment, ensuring that if we're putting this much additional funding into public education, how we report and talk about what districts might need to be successful.

The steering committee's roles and responsibilities will include the following:

- Commit to speaking with constituencies, community members, districts, teachers, principals, data staff, financial advisors, other General Assembly members, partner organizations, etc.
- Commit to asking challenging questions to ensure the quality of resources for this work.
- Commit to engaging and pushing the department in productive ways of thinking.

Priority 2: TISA Training Updates

- The legislation requires a significant amount of professional development over this first year, so there must be professional development for different stakeholders responsible for designing and/or passing the local budgets. Commissioner Schwinn shared the department will also, as always, provide technical assistance upon a district's request.
- A no-cost professional development series is in development, to provide additional support to districts as they navigate the TISA funding formula and the TISA Guide, which will be published by July 1, 2023. The training would be freely available for anyone to use or reuse to ensure that all our stakeholders understand their connection to the formula and how to maximize the related outcomes.
- Many districts are discussing redesigning their budgets and allocating additional money to continue some of the best practices they started with for federal relief funding.

Priority 3: Procurements

- Procurements in the state take about 12 months, and the department has been hard at work ensuring the procurements can be executed. Some of the early prototypes are in place for committee members' feedback that will be shared with the vendors to be reflective of what you all would like to see.
- The department did not receive additional staffing for TISA implementation and will redeploy and restructure staffing to provide ongoing support.
- Regarding the work for the active contracts, the department is working with SAS to enhance the State Report Card to include TISA allocation information and TISA expenditure information.
- The department is also working with Accenture, through another procurement, to develop a website resource on the Best for All Central hub to provide professional development, visual presentation, informational pamphlets, and other materials.
- A third procurement has been executed with PCG to provide an enhanced web platform for all student plans required under TISA, called TN PULSE, which will be launched July 1, 2023. TN PULSE will be the state's system of record for all compliance, auditing and funding related to student learning plans. This platform will be provided to districts for free to operationalize Individual Education Programs (IEPs), Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), Individual Learning Plans for Students with Dyslexia (ILP-Ds), and Section 504 plans.

Priority 4: TISA Reporting

- Chelsea Crawford shared that the State Report Card is a long-standing tool for Tennessee, and the current state report card is developed in partnership with SAS. Today, the State Report Card provides helpful elements about districts and schools, including assessment and accountability data, and while the department works to integrate the TISA reporting on the financial piece of school investments, we will take the opportunity to improve functionalities that should feel very familiar, such as the school comparison feature.
- The State Report Card will house TISA data beginning this coming school year and will be released in fall 2023.
- In the State Report Card that will be released later this fall, stakeholders will see reflection of the transition from the state's previous funding formula, the BEP, and the implementation of the new TISA funding formula, which goes into effect July 1.
- Financial reporting information on the 22-23 school year will reflect BEP funding. The State Report Card will also include TISA allocations for the first year of implementation, 23-23 school year.
- When the State Report Card is released in the fall of 2024, there will be an alignment in reporting because that is when the state report card expenditure reporting on the previous school year will catch up, and allocations as well as expenditures under the TISA funding formula will be reported.
- This fall, the Report Card will include some components that will help bridge the gap between our current state to this future state in terms of storytelling about return on investment.
- The department has been in communication with school directors and other stakeholders about the necessary elements of reporting, including state and federal reporting requirements as well as nonrequired elements that could be reported to support districts in making informed, student-based decisions.
- Directors have shared with the department that including details on the State Report Card that are not required by our state or the federal government that could help develop a more comprehensive understanding amongst stakeholders about district- and school-level performance and decision-making. As an example, the Report Card could include an expanded list of designations (Reward Schools, Priority Schools, Best for All Districts, etc.).
- Chelsea showed the committee a snapshot of the back end of the State Report Card, which the group will unpack over the next few meetings.
 - The department has great flexibility to drive updates, enhancements, and improvements on the State Report Card to ensure that this robust information presents in a way diverse stakeholders understand. Part of the reason the committee will be thinking about reporting alongside the department is to bring together everyone's diverse perspectives, roles, and

responsibilities that will all bring different inputs, views, and priorities into the reporting space.

- In the next meeting, the committee will spend time behind the scenes in the development environment for the new State Report Card to review some of the components mentioned in terms of enhanced functionality that exist.
- The committee will see some early mockups and wireframes of how the department thinks about reporting on the expenditure side. Fast forwarding to this future state, the TISA report card shows allocations at the district and the school level and reflects expenditures made at the district and the school level.
 - As a thought exercise, the committee was asked to imagine a world where we must report on a financial metric, such as staffing. When TISA expenditure data is public, there will be comparisons between districts, and questions about differences or distinctions. There are many reasons or contexts for why those things might differ and why decisions vary across districts—how can we help illuminate this context on the State Report Card?
 - A director of schools provided feedback that it would be beneficial to include the teachers' tenure whether it be the average or actual tenure on the State Report Card. It could relate to the staffing patterns and the teachers in their district.
 - Another example of the reporting possibilities lies in the community partnerships that help make our schools and students successful. Some districts have indicated they would like to see included on the State Report Card the critical services and/or funding provided at the local level by philanthropy or community/nonprofit organizations that would not be captured in federal, state or local financial reporting.

Steering Committee Q&A

- A committee member asked if people will be able to compare school to school and district to district on this information along with comparability within the report.
 - Chelsea responded that is one of the significant functionalities that the department is spending a lot of time on currently, not just across financial components, but comparing across all reporting components such as accountability data. For example, when thinking about academic achievement in the future state when letter grades are assigned to schools and districts, there are comparison functionalities that the department is building to allow you to toggle between schools to compare metrics on the report.
 - Additionally, there's been a gap on the State Report Card in linking a school to its home district, or a district to its schools. This feature will be added.

- A committee member asked if most of the anticipated reporting numbers and information gathering be done at the state level and who will be responsible for this project.
 - Chelsea responded that the department is trying to limit the burden and use this opportunity to streamline some of the reporting and collection processes through innovative measures. For example, the department asks districts for pieces of data many times during the school year—streamlining the number of asks and being intentional in data collection is a big area of focus.
 - The department will ensure compliance with state and federal laws about reporting, and will work with districts to be innovative and helpful when thoughtfully designing reports and future iterations of the State Report Card.
 - Further, some districts are thinking very intentionally about reporting and asking questions about the types of district-level reports, such as school board-approved budget documents, that they could put forward on their website at the local level.
 - It is important that state and local reports are available, interpretable and usable in order to support school and district leaders in communicating with their school communities, local decision-makers or elected officials on why they are making certain spending decisions towards goals that they've set forward for their district or school.
- A committee member asked for the appropriate way we submit constituents' questions.
 - Send questions and ideas to [Grace Shelton](#) (or [Chelsea Crawford](#)). Grace is the point person at the agency who owns the State Report Card work by working with SAS to build and enhance reporting to ensure the State Report Card is a tool that can give powerful insights.
- A committee member asked for the guidelines and best practices for spending this money, how the department has articulated that to superintendents around the state, and how the steering committee can add additional support.
 - The steering committee will spend intentional time discussing each element mentioned above. At any given level, the department wants to ensure that investments are spent toward a student's need to improve. Another component that the state is focused on is transparency and ensuring this reporting component can be reflective and allows districts to explain the strategic decisions they make regarding budgeting.
 - Sam Percy shared that this will be an iterative process. Some questions were posed about how the department will surface what best practices and spending look like. As the department builds more reporting each year and gets more information from districts, there will be a better ability to highlight

those returns on investments happening at the local level and continue to refine it year to year. That's part of the input that the department is looking for from the committee.

- A committee member shared that one of the biggest concerns that stakeholders have is that all the reporting requirements and rules be the same for public schools, charter schools, and private schools. The committee member asked for all to be held accountable to the same rules to create a level playing field.
- A committee member asked if there is a way within the report card to lift suitable lessons learned from those districts that are succeeding?
 - There will be pages on the future state TISA report card that connects some of the expenditures to those big goals seen in TISA Outcomes funding.
- The department is going to relaunch the Best for All Central website, which has undergone a massive improvement in user experience. One of the goals for the committee's discussion is to bring in some of those website resources together so the committee can make a connection between things that we see on the State Report Card, the TCAP Family Portal, and best practices across some of the department's learning networks.

Wrap Up/Announcements

- Committee members were asked to review all information available for [TISA and](#) to speak with stakeholders, constituents, et cetera, to get a robust sense of what people hope and expect to contribute to upcoming conversation. The committee will focus on the reporting features during the second meeting along with the timeline for reporting for future years to come. The committee will talk in smaller groups and then come back as a whole for a chance for everyone to speak robustly about some of the more significant questions and topics.
- Lastly, the committee members are asked to share any feedback or questions from their communities, through e-mail right away.

Adjourn

Next meeting: May 31, 2023, at 2:00-3:00 CT via Microsoft Teams